

Policy Order No. 7, about Noise pollution

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City Clerk Agenda

To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>;

Cc: Lopez, Donna <dlopez@cambridgema.gov>;

To the Honorable City Council, City of Cambridge:

I am writing to register support for Policy Order No. 7, about Noise pollution, filed by Councillors Kelley and McGovern, requesting that the City Manager begin work on this issue, so that this message can be entered into the record.

I live on Kinnaird Street directly across from the delivery driveway of the King School and have lived here for more than two decades.

The current three years of massive construction on this site, with behemoths of machines I did not suspect existed digging geothermal wells to such depths of the earth that they reach a HEAT layer that can send heat up to the school itself, and such that every day between 7 a.m. and 3 or 4 in the afternoon whenever any of these machines (steam shovels and other powerful contraptions) backs up, they emit a steady, loud, shrill, pulsing alarm to warn people and other vehicles of the danger; and such that at certain times snow or dirt or other cargo is delivered by trucks or series of trucks, often coming the wrong way down from Putnam which is temporarily but for three years made legal intermittently for this purpose, the whole scene dumping dirt and diesel onto the streets and into the air and our homes, so that we make every effort not to open any windows ever and to use air cleaners, the whole spectacle can be deafening and often is, particularly in the period when the wintry cold and snow made some of the masonry require to be heated 24 hours a day by a motor pulsing on and on, and in the current period when at times for six days a week the much louder pounding and motorized driving of the geothermal well digging machinery works on the 80 thermal wells the workers are trying to completely excavate between now and the King School re-opening date, I believe next September 18th.

We are old and disabled and do not any longer sail off to work each day, so only rarely are we spared every sound emitted by this often rather deafening site.

Once the driveway entry was not wide enough for these enormous pieces of equipment, so a giant steamshovel spent a day or two POUNDING and

POUNDING the bottom of its shovel onto the cement sidewalk, apparently to beat it down to a lower level to enable the wide equipment to enter the site more conveniently. At times like this our building, immediately across the street, shudders as if with an earthquake and develops cracks as the floorboards separate, cracks as the walls stress, cracks as the wainscoting sections separate. This is incredibly unsettling as you perhaps can imagine.

It is also the case that the local streets have homes grandfathered between other homes on the streets, and our driveway flows directly in a line with the King School delivery drive across the street, so that the noise is amplified and can get much louder even than it sounds on the street.

It is not clear that the impact on the residents has been taken into account much, except that at times a small street sweeper tries to calm down the mud and dirt on the various nearby streets, driving around over and over, and at times police officers man the site to direct the wrong-way traffic and protect ordinary little vehicles from the huge equipment and help the huge equipment drivers negotiate the difficult path around the corner of Putnam and into the site.

Noise is an excellent place to begin investigation of the possibility of sparing the residents some of this hammering, roaring, pounding, shrieking, day in and day out noise and restoring so trace of the quiet enjoyment of the property.

Councillors Kelley and MCGovern are greatly to be commended for proposing this merciful policy order.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Marotta
118 Kinnaird